

This week, the House of Representatives considered the Ryan Republican budget along with a number of alternatives offered by different caucuses within Congress, including the Democratic Caucus, the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC), the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the Republican Study Committee.

These budgets are more than collections of numbers, they are a statement of the values of those who offer and support them, their vision for America's future. Through our votes on these budget alternatives, Members of Congress have sent a message to their constituents and public at large about our values, so the American people can see what we stand for and who we stand up for.

I was proud to vote in favor of several of the alternative budgets and against the Ryan Republican budget. Each of the alternatives I supported was not perfect; had I authored them alone, I would have made some changes so that they more accurately reflected the needs and values of my Silicon Valley district, but some compromises were necessary in order to gain consensus. But on balance, each of them represented a vision for America's future that was far better than the one offered by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan in the Republican budget.

Chairman Paul Ryan's Republican Budget relies on the same old failed policies of the past that have widened the income and wealth gaps in our country, and would even speed up the redistribution of income from the most vulnerable to the wealthiest. It contemplates balancing the nation's budget on the backs of working families and the elderly. The Ryan budget achieves much of its "savings" by eviscerating critical programs for poor and working families and seniors, such as health-insurance subsidies for middle-income workers and food stamps; turning Medicare into an under-funded voucher plan and raising the eligibility age; and block granting Medicaid. It would also decimate transportation and infrastructure investments, which are proven to foster growth and increase productivity, putting hundreds of thousands of jobs at risk. The people of the 17th District of California who elected me do not support this vision for America's future.

The Democratic Alternative Budget replaces the harmful budget sequestration, which has reduced federal funding across the board and threatens vital services such as low income housing assistance, with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. It protects the Medicare guarantee and Medicaid services, preserves Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage expansions and patient protections, and extends tax relief for the middle-class. It emphasizes job creation, generating 1.2 million more jobs this year than the Ryan Republican Budget, while making key investments in America's future and growth by preventing the doubling of student loan interest rates, providing \$50 billion for immediate transportation priorities and \$10 billion for the infrastructure bank. The Democratic Alternative Budget makes smart, targeted spending cuts and raises revenue from ending tax breaks for special interests and calling for shared responsibility.

The CPC Budget invests in America's future, based on the premise that the best way to reduce

our long-term deficit is to put Americans back to work. Its investments in job creation and long-term economic growth are projected to reduce unemployment to pre-recession levels in three years through repairing our nation's roads and bridges, investing in teachers and schools, and giving working families a tax credit to boost consumer demand. Likewise, the CBC Budget makes significant investments in education, job training, transportation and infrastructure, and advanced research and development programs that will accelerate our economic recovery. At the same time, the CBC Budget protects the social safety net without cutting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, or SNAP. It makes tough but responsible decisions to raise new revenue by making our tax system fairer, replacing sequestration, investing in job growth, and reducing the deficit over the next decade.

Americans are struggling to get back on their feet after several years of high unemployment, slow economic growth and unprecedented income inequality. At the same time, more and more seniors are dependent on Social Security for virtually all of their income. We cannot go down the path proposed by the Ryan Republican budget of ending traditional Medicare and block granting Medicaid, which will throw vulnerable Americans to the whims of private insurance companies and leave millions without adequate health coverage. This is not a path to prosperity.

For America to succeed in the face of global economic pressures and competition, we need every American to be productive; to do this, we need to raise the skill level of every American and meet the basic needs of every working family. I opposed the Ryan Republican budget because it failed to live up to this standard and did not reflect the values of my constituents. I supported the Democratic Alternative Budget, the CPC Budget, and the CBC Budget because each of them, while imperfect, presented a plan for the future that met these critical needs, and I felt it important to demonstrate to the American people that their elected officials support these priorities. Each of the budgets I supported reflects the vision of our country's future and its greatness shared by the people of the 17th Congressional District of California.